

November 15, 2013

Dear District Administrator:

During the 1985-87 budget cycle, the legislature enacted the Education for Employment Standard that embodies seven critical elements including business and education partnerships, career exploration, planning and decision-making, employability skills and attitudes, and school-supervised work-based learning. For years, districts have been required to implement robust Education for Employment plans.

During the 2013-15 budget cycle, Wisconsin passed a budget bill that included funding and legal authority for the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) to develop an academic and career planning process. More specifically, the State Superintendent must:

- Ensure that beginning in the 2017-18 school year, every school board is providing academic and career planning services to pupils enrolled in grades 6 to 12 in the school district.
- Procure, install, and maintain information technology, including computer software, to be used statewide by school districts to provide academic and career planning services to pupils in grades 6 to 12.
- Provide guidance, training, and technical assistance to school districts and school district staff, including teachers and counselors, on how to implement model academic and career plans, including training and technical assistance that is necessary to implement the information technology.
- Promulgate rules to implement academic and career plans. (s. [115.28\(59\), Stats.](#))

Academic and Career Plans (ACPs), often referred to as Individualized Learning Plans, present an opportunity to improve academic achievement and post-secondary success for all students. This bipartisan legislation clearly supports my Agenda 2017 educational transformation initiatives to ensure every child graduates ready for further education and the workplace. Research validates how ACPs improve student motivation and engagement; foster increased school-family communication; aid goal setting, planning, and achievement; and enhance transitioning after high school. This initiative provides ALL students with the opportunity to participate.

In the last year, a multi-agency ACP Task Force advised DPI on the framework components and material requirements necessary to meet this purpose. The following are derived from the Task Force work:

- ACPs are both a process AND a product (the plan);
- ACPs provide for a process of ongoing activities for student self-exploration, career exploration, career planning, career management, financial literacy, and goal orientation;

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- ACPs are a student-led, collaboratively developed plan for setting and achieving academic, post-secondary, and civic success that redefines high school graduation as a starting line – not a finish line;
- ACPs do not replace Individualized Educational Plans (IEPs) for special needs students, but rather provide for additional chances to enhance academic, supportive, and transition services already part of the IEP process;
- ACPs require a whole-school, whole-child approach that identifies, recognizes, and builds on the interests, strengths, and beliefs of each child; and
- ACPs are meant to be accessed, reviewed, and re-evaluated frequently incorporating multiple informational inputs from a variety of sources.

In the coming months, the DPI ACP workgroup will be unveiling informational materials including website pages, a fact sheet, and a self-directed audio PowerPoint to keep you up to date on the progress of the ACP development process as it occurs.

If you have questions regarding the ACP development process, contact Robin Kroyer-Kubicek, career pathways education consultant, at [Robin.Kroyer-Kubicek@dpi.wi.gov](mailto:Robin.Kroyer-Kubicek@dpi.wi.gov) or 608-266-2022.

Sincerely,

Tony Evers, PhD  
State Superintendent

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